

*Paul. Jerkinson His.*

A BRIEF  
DECLARATION  
OF THE VNIVERSA-  
LITIE OF THE CHVRCH  
of CHRIST, and the Vnitie  
of the Catholike Faith pro-  
fessed therein:

DELIVERED IN A SERMON  
before *His Maiestie* the 20<sup>th</sup>. of Iune 1624.  
at W A N S T E D.

By IAMES VSSHER, Bishop of Meath.

*The third Impression.*



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A-BRIDGE  
DECISION  
OF THE VINDICATED  
LETTER OF THE CHURCH  
OF CHRIST AND THE VIRGINS

DELIVERED IN A SERMON

By James Vassier, Rector of St. James's Church

LONDON,  
Printed by John Baskin for Robert Duncanson  
and sold by the Booksellers and Stationers  
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1739.



EPHES. 4. 13.

*Till we all come in the unitie of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Sonne of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ.*



When the Lords *Arke* was to set forward, the forme of prayer used by *Moses*, was; <sup>a</sup> *Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee, flee before thee.* The sweet Psalmist of Israel, traming his descant to this ground, beginneth the Psalm which he pre-

a Num. 10.  
35.

pared to be sung at the removing of the *Arke*, after the same manner. <sup>b</sup> *Let God arise: let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him, flee before him:* and then goeth on, till at length he hath rayfed his note unto his full height: *Thou hast ascended up on high: thou hast led captivitie captive: thou hast received gifts for men* (Psalm. 68. 18). Which being by our Apostle in <sup>c</sup> this Chapter interpreted of the Ascension of our Saviour Christ into heaven, and made the very spring from whence the matter of my present Text is derived, leadeth us to the just application of the type to the truth, and putteth us

b Psal. 68. 1.

c Ephes. 4. 8.

## A Sermon Preached

in minde. that the removing of the Arke, which gave occasion to the penning of his Psalm, was an adumbration of our Saviour removeall from the Earth to Heaven; and that by this absence of his, we are no losers, but gainers, seeing he is ascended <sup>up</sup> on high, both to triumph over his and our foes, [*he led captivitie captive*] and to conferre benefits upon his friends. [*he gave gifts unto men.*]

d Heb. 9. 4.

e Heb. 12. 24.

The <sup>d</sup> Arke of the Covenant (we know) was appointed to be a figure of <sup>e</sup> Iesus the Mediatour of the new Covenant: the great King, Prophet and Priest of his Church. Therefore was it ordered, that the Arke should haue a crowne of gold about it: (Exod. 37. 2.) than which, what could be more fit to set forth the state of our King? for thus wee see Iesus crowned with glory and honour. (Heb. 2. 9.) Vpon the Ark stood the Propitiatorie or Mercie-seate, whence God did use to deliver his Oracles from betwixt the Cherubins: than w<sup>ch</sup>, what more lively representation could there be of the Prophecticall office of our Saviour? of whom it is written: *God hath in these last dayes spoken unto us by his Sonne.* (Heb. 1. 2.) The Arke had both the Rod and the Tables of the Law, by Gods appointment placed within it: than which, what could be more apt to expresse the satisfaction, which our high Priest was to make unto his Fathers justice, as well by his *Passive* as by his *Active* obedience? for as he felt the stroke of the Rod for us, that <sup>f</sup> the chastisement of our peace being laid upon him, with his stripes we might be healed: so <sup>g</sup> it behooved him also to fulfill the Law and all righteousness; that so he might be <sup>h</sup> the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that beleeveth. The letter of the Law being not more certainly to be found within the

f Esa. 53. 5.

g Math. 3. 15.

and 5. 17.

h Rom. 10. 4.

the Arke, than the accomplishment thereof within him : according to that which he spake by his holy Prophet. *<sup>i</sup> In the volume of the booke it is written of mee, that I should doe thy will, O God: yea, thy Law is within my heart.*

<sup>i</sup> Psal. 40. 7. 8.  
Heb. 10. 7.

The Arke had many removes from place to place, whiles it sojourned in the *Tabernacle*: but was brought up at last into the *Temple*, there to dwell upon God's holy Hill; the place of which he himselfe had said.

*<sup>k</sup> This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.* Where, at the first entry, King Salomon stood ready to entertaine him with this welcome, *<sup>l</sup> Arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the Arke of thy strength: Let thy Priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation; and let thy Saints reioyce in goodnesse.* Our blessed Saviour, in the dayes of his flesh, had no resting place, but continually <sup>m</sup> went about doing good: untill at length <sup>n</sup> he was received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God. For when he had ended his progresse upon Earth, and <sup>o</sup> finished there that worke which his Father had given him to doe; he <sup>p</sup> left the world, and went to the Father; making his last remove unto the high Court of Heaven, <sup>q</sup> where he is to reside untill the time of the restitution of all things. *<sup>r</sup> The Temple of GOD was opened in Heaven, and there was seene in his Temple the Arke of his Testament,* saith S. Iohn in the Apocalypse. If we looke to the corporall presence of our Saviour; in the Temple of Heaven must this Arke be sought for, in no other place is it to be found: but if we looke to the vertue comming from him, by the operation of his word and Spirit; so we shall finde him in his Temple upon

<sup>k</sup> Psal. 132. 14.

<sup>l</sup> Ibid. vers. 8.

<sup>9. 16.</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Chron. 6. 41

<sup>m</sup> Act. 10. 38.

<sup>n</sup> Mar. 16.

<sup>o</sup> Ioh. 17. 4.

<sup>p</sup> Ioh. 16. 28.  
and 19. 30.

<sup>q</sup> Act. 3. 21.

<sup>r</sup> Rev. 11. 19.

(Mat. 28. 20. upon earth, <sup>f</sup> present with us alwayes, even unto the end of the world : for, these were the gifts that, when he ascended into Heaven, he did bestow upon men.

z Psal. 68. 18. This the Prophet layeth downe thus : <sup>z</sup> *Thou hast ascended up on high : thou hast received gifts for men.* The

u Ephes. 4. 8. Apostle citeth it thus : <sup>u</sup> *When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men.* The reconciliation is easie : He re-

ceived those gifts, not to retaine them with himselfe, but to distribute them for the behoofe of his Church.

So for the Spirit, S. Peter teacheth us, Acts 2. 33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, [there is his ascending up on high] and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Ghost, [there is his receiving] he hath shed forth this which ye now see and heare. [there is his giving of this gift unto men.]* And for the Ministry of the Word, he himselfe intimateth as much in his

Commission, given to the Apostles, Mat. 28. 18. 19.

*All power is given unto mee in heaven and in earth :*

*[there he receiveth] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations : [there he giveth this gift unto men.]* <sup>x</sup> *He gave some*

x Ephes. 4. 11. 12.

*Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints :*

saith our Apostle here. That herein also that might be fulfilled, which we heard to haue beene uttered, when

y 2 Chron. 6.

the Arke was brought to his resting place <sup>y</sup> : *Let thy*

41.

Psal. 132. 9. 16

*Priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy Saints reioyce in goodnesse.*

The worke of the Ministry, how meanelly soever it be esteemed in the World ; yet in the estimation of our Saviour Christ, was one of the choysest gifts, that in this solemnitie of his triumphant <sup>z</sup> ascending up far above all heavens, he thought fit to bestow upon his Church

z Ephes. 4. 10.

Church here upon earth : as that which tended both to the <sup>a</sup> *perfecting of the Saints*, and to the *edifying* of his owne *body*. For as <sup>b</sup> it hath pleased the Father, *that in him all fulnesse should dwell* : so the Son is also pleased, not to hold it any disparagement, that <sup>c</sup> *his Body*, the Church, should be accounted *the fulnesse of him that filleth all in all*. That howsoever in himselfe he be most absolutely and perfectly complete ; yet is his Church so neerely conjoynd unto him, that he holdeth not himselfe full without it : but as long as any one member remaineth yet ungathered and unknit unto this mysticall body of his, he accounteth, in the meane time, somewhat to be deficient in himselfe. And therefore our Apostle having, in the words immediately going before this Text, declared, that the Ministry was instituted *for the edifying of the bodie of Christ* ; addeth presently, *Till wee all come in the unitie of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Sonne of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ*.

In which words we may obserue aswell the *Matter* of this Building [*wee all*] as the *Structure* of it ; and further also consider in the Structure, *first*, the laying of the foundation [*In the unitie of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Sonne of God*] *secondly*, the bringing of the worke to perfection, and the raising of it to his just height [*unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ*].

The *Matter* then of this spirituall edifice (that wee may begin with that) are *wee* our selves. <sup>d</sup> *Yee also as lively stones, are built up a spirituall house* : saith Saint Peter. To this Saint Paul doth here adde a note of V-

B niver-

<sup>a</sup> Ib. ver. 12.

<sup>b</sup> Col. 1. 19.

<sup>c</sup> Ephes. 1. 23.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. 2. 5.

niversalitie [W<sup>B</sup> ALL:] as futing best with the nature of the *Catholick* or *Vniverfall Church*, which is that *body of Christ*, of the *edifying* whereof he here treateth: of which therefore he telleth us more plainly in another place; that *by one spirit we are all baptized into one bodie, whether wee be Iewes or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free.* For the *Catholick Church* is not to be sought for in any one angle or quarter of the world: but among *all that in every place call upon the Name of Iesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.* (1 Corinthians 1. 2.) Therefore to their Lord and ours was it said; *Aske of mee, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;* and to his mysticall body, the *Catholique Church* accordingly. *I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West: I will say to the North, give up; and to the South, Keepe not backe: bring my sonnes from farre, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name.*

e 1 Cor. 12. 13.  
f Psal. 2. 8.  
g Esa. 43. 5. 6. 7.

Thus must we conceiue of the *Catholick Church*, as of one entire body; made up by the collection and aggregation of all the Faithfull unto the unitie thereof: from which union there ariseth unto every one of them such a relation to, and a dependance upon the *Church Catholique*, as *parts* use to haue in respect of their *whole*. Whereupon it followeth, that neyther particular persons, nor particular Churches, are to worke as severall divided bodies by themselves (which is the ground of all *Schisme*), but are to teach, and to be taught, and to doe all other Christian duties, as parts conjoynd unto the

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the whole, and members of the same Commonwealth or corporation; and therefore the Bishops of the ancient Church, though they had the governmēt of particular Congregations onely committed unto them, yet in regard of this communion which they held with the Vniversall, did usually take to themselves the title of *Bishops of the Catholick Church*. Which maketh strongly aswell against the new *Separatists*, as the old *Donatists*: who either hold it a thing not much materiall, so they professe the faith of Christ, whether they doe it in the Catholick Communion, or out of it; or else (which is worse) dote so much upon the perfectiō of their own part, that they refuse to joyn in fellowship with the rest of the body of Christians; as if they themselues were the onely people of God, and all wisdome must live and die with them and their generation.

And herein, of all others, doe our Romanists most fearefully offend; as being the authors of the most cruell schisme, that ever hath been seene in the Church of God. Those infamous schismes of the *Novatians* and *Donatists* were but petty rents, in comparison of this huge rupture, which hath pulled asunder East and West, North & South; and growne to such a head at home, that in our Western parts (where this faction was so prevalent) it hath for diverse ages past been esteemed *Catholicke*. In the 17<sup>th</sup> of the Revelation wee haue a *Woman* described unto us, sitting upon *seven mountaines*, and upon *many waters*. The *Woman* is there expounded to be *that great Citie which reigneth over the Kings of the earth*. The seven mountains upon which that City sate, needed not to be ex-

h *Augustin.*  
ep. 48. Quam  
multi nihil in-  
teresse creden-  
tes in quā quis-  
que parte  
Christianus  
sit; ideo per-  
manebant in  
parte Donati,  
quia ibi nati  
erant, & eos  
inde discede-  
re, atq; ad Ca-  
tholicam ne-  
mo transire  
cogebat. Et  
paulō post Pu-  
tabamus qui-  
dem nihil in-  
teresse ubi fidē  
Christi tene-  
remus: sed  
gratias Domi-  
no, qui nos à  
divisione col-  
legit, & hoc  
uni Deo con-  
gruere, ut in  
unitate cola-  
tur, ostendit.  
i Rev. 17. 18.

pounded: every childe knew what was meant there-  
 by. The waters are interpreted <sup>k</sup> *peoples, and multi-  
 tudes, and nations, and tongues.* Which is that very V-  
 niversallitie and Catholicisme that the Romanists are  
 wont so much to brag of. For, this *woman* is the par-  
 ticular Church of *Rome*, the *City-Church*; which they  
 call the *Mother-Church*, the holy Ghost stileth <sup>l</sup> the  
*Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.* Those  
*peoples, and multitudes, & nations, and tongues,* are such  
 as this proud Citie reigneth over: the *Catholick-Ro-  
 man Church* they are commonly called by them-  
 selves; but by the holy Ghost, <sup>m</sup> the *Beast* upon which  
 the Woman sitteth.

This *woman* is the Head of the faction, and the ve-  
 ry Mother of this schism: the *Beast*, that is to say, they  
 that suffer themselves to be thus ridden by her, are her  
 abbettors and supporters in it. For the *particular  
 Church of Rome* (not being content to be a fellow-  
 member with the rest of the Churches of Christ, and  
 to haue a joynt dependance with them upō the whole  
 body of the Church Catholick, <sup>n</sup> *which is the Mother  
 of us all*) will needs goe out of her rank; and, scorning  
 any longer to be accounted one of the *branches* of the  
 Catholick Church, would faine be acknowledged to  
 be the *root* of it: so that now all other Churches must  
 hold their dependance upon it, or otherwise be cast  
 forth as withered branches, which are fit onely to be  
 throwne into the fire, and burned. The wisdom of  
 God foresaw this insolency long before-hand: and  
 therefore caused a Caveat to be entred against it, even  
 in that Epistle which was specially directed to the  
 Church of *Rome* it selfe. The words are plaine enough,  
 Rom.

*Rom. II. 18. If thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.* The Church of *Rome* therefore must know that shee is no more a *root* to beare up other Churches, than other Churches are to beare up her: she may not goe beyond her line, and boast her selfe to be the *root* of the Catholick Church, but be contented to be born her selfe by the *root*, aswell as other particular Churches are. For a streame to sever it selfe from the common Fountaine, that it may bee counted a Fountaine it selfe, without dependance upon any other; is the next way to make an end of it, and dry it up. The Church of *Rome* may doe well to think of this, and leave off her vaine boasting. *I sit a Queen, and am no Widow, and shall see no sorrow.* Other Churches may faile, and the gates of hell may prevaile against them: but it cannot fall out so with me. Whereas she might remember, that they were *Romanes*, unto whom the Apostle so long since gave this admonition. *Be not high minded, but feare. For if God spared not the naturall branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodnesse and severity of God: on them which fell, severitie, but towards thee, goodnes, if thou continue in his goodnesse: otherwise THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT OFF.*

o Rev. 18. 7.

p Rom 11.  
20, 21, 22.

The *Romanes* therefore by their pride may get a fall, aswell as others; and the Church of *Rome* by infidelity may be cut off, aswell as any other congregation: and yet the Catholick Church subsist for all that, as having for her foundation neither *Rome*, nor *Rome's* Bishop, but *Iesus Christ*, the Sonne of the living God. And yet this proud Dame and her daughters, the particular Church of *Rome* I meane, and that

which they call the *Catholick Romane* (or the faction rather that prevaileth in them both) have in these latter ages confined the whole Church of Christ within themselves, and excluded all others that were not under the *Romane* obedience, as aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise. The *Donatists* were cryed out against by our forefathers, for shutting up the Church within the parts of the *South*; and rejecting all others that held not correspondency with that patch of theirs: And could they thinke well then of them, that should conclude the Church within the *western* parts of the world, and exclude all other Christians from the body of Christ, that held not by the same root there that they did? It is a strange thing to me, that wise men should make such large discourses of the *Catholique* Church, and bring so many testimonies to prove the Vniversallitie of it: & not discern, that while by this means they think they have gotten a great victory over us, they have in very truth overthrowne themselves; for when it cometh to the point, in stead of the *Catholick* Church which consisteth of the communion of all nations, they obtrude their own peece unto us: circumscribing the Church of Christ within the precincts of the *Romish* jurisdiction, and leaving all the world beside to the power of Sathan; for with them it is a resolved case; that *to every creature it is altogether of necessitie to salvation, to be subiect to the Romane Bishop.*

What must then become of the poore *Moscovites* and *Grecians* (to say nothing of the reformed Churches) in *Europe*? What of the *Egyptian* and *Ethiopi-*

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q Subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanæ creaturæ declaramus, dicimus, definimus, & pronuntiamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis Bonifac. VIII. in Extravag. De majoritate & obedientia, cap. V. nam sanctam.

an Churches in *Africk*? what of the great companies of Christians scattered over all *Asia*, even from *Constantinople* unto the *East Indies*, which have and still doe endure more afflictions and pressures for the Name of Christ, than they have ever done, that would be accounted the onely friends of Christ? Must these, because they are not the Popes subjects, be therefore denied to be Christ's subjects? Because they are not under the obedience of the *Romane Church*, doe they thereupon forfeit the estate which they claime in the *Catholick Church*, out of which there is no salvation? Must we give all these for gone, and conclude, that they are certainly damned? They who talke so much of the *Catholick Church*, but indeed stand for their owne *particular*, must of force sinke as low in *uncharitablenesse*, as they have thrust themselves deep in *schisme*: wee who talke lesse of the *Vniversallitie* of the Church, but hold the truth of it, cannot finde in our hearts to passe such a bloody sentence upō so many poore soules, that have given their Names to Christ. He whose pleasure it was to spread the Churches seed so farre, said to East, West, North, and South; *Give*: it is not for us then to say; *Keepe backe*. He hath given to his Sonne the *heathen* for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession: wee for our parts dare not abridge this grant, and limit this great Lordship, as we conceiue it may best fit our owne turnes; but leave it to his owne latitude, and seek for the *Catholick Church* neither in this part nor in that peece, but (as it hath beene before said in the words of the Apostle) among<sup>r</sup> all that in every place call upon the Name of  
 1 Cor. 1. 2.  
 1e-

*Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*

*(Ecclesia ex pluribus personis congregatur: & tamen una dicitur, propter unitatem fidei. Hieron. (si modo is huius Commentariorum author est) in Psal. 23.*

*1 Ephes. 4. 5.*

*2 Ibid v. 11.*

Yea, but how can this be, will some say, seeing the *Catholike Church* is but *one*: and the principall reason for which it is accounted one, is 'the *unitie of the faith* professed therein? How then can this unitie of faith bee preserved in all places, if one speciall **Church** be not set as a *Mistresse* over all the rest, and one chiefe Bishop appointed for a *Master* over all others, by whom in matters of faith every one must be ruled? And out of such different professions, as are to bee found among the divided Christians in those severall parts of the world, how can there be fit matter drawne for the making up of one *Vniversall Church*? To this I answer (and so passe from the *Matter* of the Building, to the *Structure*) that it is most true indeede, that in the **Church** there is 'one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme: for so we are taught by the Apostle in this chapter. But yet, in the first place, it is to be considered, that this *unitie of the faith* must be compassed by such meanes as God hath ordained for the procuring of it; and not by any politicke trickes of mans devising. Now for the bringing of us all to this *unity of the faith*, the Apostle here telleth us, that **Christ** "gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers. If he had thought that the maintenance of this *unitie* did depend upon the singularitie of any one Apostle, or Pastor, or Teacher: is it to be imagined, that hee would have overslipped such a singular person (even in that very place where, of all others, his presence was most requisite) and runne altogether, as he doth, upon the plurall number?

That

That the multitude of Teachers dispersed over the world, without any such dependencie or correspondencie, should agree together in laying the foundations of the same faith, is a speciall worke of Gods Spirit. And it is *x the unity of the Spirit* which the Apostle here speaketh of, and exhorteth us to *keepe in the bond of peace*. Whereas the unity of which our Adversaries boast so much (which is nothing else but a wilfull suffering of themselves to be led blind-fold by one man, who commonly is more blind than many of themselves) is no fruit of the *spirit*, but of meere carnall policie: and may serve peradventure for a *bond of peace* betwixt themselves and their owne partie (such as the Priests of *Antichrist* were to have, and as many as would be content to yeeld themselves to the conduct of such a **C**ommander) but hath proved the greatest block that ever stood in the way, for giving impediment to the peace and unity of the universall Church, which here we looke after. And therefore *Nilus* Archbishop of *Thessalonica*, entring into the consideration of the original ground of that long continued schisme, whereby the West standeth as yet divided from the East, and the Latin Churches from the Greeke, wrote a whole booke purposely of this argument, wherein he sheweth, *x that there is no other cause to be assigned of this distraction, but that the Pope will not permit the cognisance of the controversie unto a generall Councell, but will needs sit himselfe as the alone Teacher of the point in question, and have others hearken unto him as if they were his Scholars: and that this is contrary both to the ordinances, and the practice of the Apostles and the Fathers.* Ne-

χειν, & ὅτι τὸ τοῖσιν ἑλλότριον τῶν ἀποστολικῶν & πατερικῶν, κινόμενων καὶ πράξεων.

C

ther

x Ibid. ver. 1.  
y Pace uā, id  
est, impietas  
sua unitate se  
jactant; agen-  
tes se non ut  
Christi epico-  
pos, sed ut An-  
tichristiacer-  
dotes. Hilar.  
contr. Auxenti-  
um.

z Λόγος ἀπο-  
δεικνύς μὴ  
ἄλλο τι τὸ τῆς  
διατάσεως τῆς  
Λατίνων ἐκ-  
κλησίας καὶ ἡ-  
μῶν μέχρι τοῦ  
παρόντος, αἰ-  
τίον εἶναι, ἡτὸ  
μὴ βέλεθαι τῆς  
Πάπης οὐκ ἐ-  
κκλησιαστικῶς  
δὲ τῆς ἀμ-  
φοβητικῆς  
διάγνωσιν οὐ-  
πιτρέψαι.  
ἀλλ' αὐτὸν  
μόνον διδάσ-  
καλον ἐδέχοντο  
τῶν ζητούμενων  
καθέξεναι.  
τὰς δὲ ἄλλας,  
ἐκκλησιαστικῶν  
μοίρα ἀπα-  
χέοντας ἐ-

ther indeed is there any hope, that ever wee shall see a generall peace, for matters of Religion, settled in the Christian world, as long as this supercilious Master shall be suffered to keepe this rule in Gods house: how much soever he be magnified by his owne Disciples, and made the onely foundation upon which the unitie of the Catholick Church dependeth.

a 1 Cor 3. 10.  
11. 12.

b Heb. 6. 1.

c Ephes. 4. 7.

Now in the next place, for the further opening of the *unitie of the faith*, wee are to call unto minde the distinction which the Apost'e maketh betwixt <sup>a</sup> *the foundation*, and that which is *builded thereupon*: betwixt <sup>b</sup> *the principles of the doctrine of Christ*, and that which he calleth *perfection*. The *unitie of the faith and of the knowledge of the Sonne of God* here spoken of, hath reference (as we heard) to the *foundation*: as that which followeth of a *perfect man*; and the *measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ*, to the *superstruction and perfection*. In the former there is a generall *unitie* among all true beleevers: in the latter, a great deale of *varietie*; there being severall degrees of *perfection* to be found in severall persons, <sup>c</sup> *according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. So we see in a materiall Building, that still there is but one foundation, though great disparitie be observed in sundry parts of the superstruction: some rooms are high, some lowe, some darke, some lightsome, some more substantially, some more slightly builded, and in tract of time some prove more ruinous than others; yet all of them belong to one building, as long as they hold together, and stand upon the same foundation. And even thus is it in the spirituall Building also; whether we respect the *practicall* part of Christianitie, or the *intellectuall*.

In

In the *practicall* we see wonderfull great difference betwixt Christian and Christian : some by Gods mercy attaine to a higher measure of perfection, and keepe themselves unspotted from the cōmon corruptions of the world ; others watch not so carefully over their wayes, and lead not such strict lives, but are oftentimes overtaken and fall fowly : that he who looketh upon the one and the other, would hardly thinke that one Heaven should receive them both. But although the one doth so farre outstrip the other in the practice of new Obedience ( which is the Christian mans race ) yet are there certaine fundamentall principles, in which they both concur ; as <sup>d</sup> a desire to feare Gods name, <sup>e</sup> repentance for sinnes past, and a sincere <sup>f</sup> purpose of heart for the time to come to cleave unto the LORD. Which whosoever hath, is under mercie, and may not be excluded from the *Communion of Saints*. In like manner for the *intellectuall* part : the <sup>g</sup> first principles of the Oracles of God (as the Apostle calleth them) hold the place of the common foundation, in which all Christians must be grounded : although <sup>h</sup> some be babes, and for further knowledge are *unskilfull in the word of righteousness* ; other some are of perfect age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evill.

d Neh. 1. 11.  
e Luk. 13. 3. 5.  
Heb. 6. 1.  
f Act 11. 23.

g Heb. 5. 12.

h Ib. ver. 13. 14.

The Oracles of God containe abundance of matter in them, and whatsoever is found in them is a fit object for *faith* to apprehend : but that all Christians should uniformly agree in the profession of all those truthe that are revealed there, is a thing that rather may be wished, than ever hoped for. Yet the varietie of mens judgements in those manie points, that be-

i Jude, ver. 3.  
k Tit. 1. 4.  
l 2 Pet. 1. 1.

m Regula fi-  
dei, pusillis  
magnisque  
communis.  
Aug. ep. 57.

ομιᾶς γὰρ  
τῆς αὐτῆς πί-  
στεως οὐσης,  
οὐτε ὁ πολὺ  
πρὶ αὐτῆς  
συνάμωμος  
εἶπεν ἐπλεό-  
νασεν, οὐτε ὁ  
τὸ ὀλίγον  
ἡλαττόνησε.  
Irenaeus, lib. 1.  
cap. 3.  
o Exod. 16.  
18.  
2 Cor. 8. 15.

long to *Theologicall* faith; doth not dissolve the unitie which they hold together in the fundamentall principles of the *Catholick* faith. The *unitie of the faith* commended here, is a *Catholick* unitie, and such as every true Christian attaineth unto. Till wee *A L L come in the unitie of the faith*: saith the Apostle. As there is a *common salvation*, so is there a *common faith*; which is *alike precious* in the highest Apostle and the meanest beleever. For we may not thinke that Heaven was prepared for deepe Clerkes onely: and therefore beside that larger measure of knowledge, whereof all are not capable, there must be *a Rule of faith common to small and great*; which as it must consist but of few propositions, (for simple men cannot beare away many) so is it also requisite, that those articles should be of such weight and moment, that they may be sufficient to make a man wise unto salvation: that howsoever in other points learned men may goe beyond common Christians, and exceed one another likewise by many degrees: yet in respect of these radicall truthes, which is the necessarie and common food of all the children of the Church, there *is* not an unitie onely, but such a kinde of equalitie also brought in among all sorts of Christians, as was heretofore among the Congregation of the Israelites in the collection of their Manna; where *he that gathered much, had nothing over; and hee that gathered little, had no lacke*.

If then salvation by beleieving these common principles may be had, and to salvation none can come that is not first a member of the *Catholick Church of Christ*: it followeth thereupon, that *the unitie of the faith,*

*faith*, generally requisite for the incorporating of Christians into that blessed societie, is not to be extended beyond those common principles. Which may further be made manifest unto us by the continuall practice of the Catholick Church her selfe, in the matriculation of her children, and the first admittance of them into her communion. For when shee prepared her *Catechumeni* for Baptisme, and by that dore received them into the congregation of Christs flock; we may not think her iudgement to have beene so weake, that shee would omit any thing herein that was essentially necessary for the making of one a member of the Church. Now the profession which she required of all that were to receive Baptisme, was, for the *Agenda* or practicall part, an abrenuntiation of the Divell, the World, and the Flesh, with all their sinfull workes and lustes; and for the *Credenda*, the things to be beleaved, an acknowledgement of the articles of the Creed: which being solemnly done, she then baptised them *in this faith*; intimating thereby sufficiently, that this was that *one Faith* commended unto her by the Apostles, as the other that *one Baptisme* which was appointed to be the  $\text{P}$  Sacrament of it.

p Sacramen-  
tum fidei. Aug.  
epist. 231

This Creed, though for substance it was the same every where, yet for forme was somewhat different; and in some places received moe enlargements than in others. The Westerne Churches herein applyed themselves to the capacitie of the meaner sort, more than the Easterne did: using in their Baptisme that shorter Forme of Confession, commonly called *The Apostles Creed*; which in the more ancient times was

q Habetur a-  
pud Epiphaniū  
in hæres. 72.  
r See my An-  
swer to the Je-  
suits challenge,  
page 284 285.

f Fr. Suarez,  
tom. 2. in 3 par.  
Thom. diss 43.  
sect. 2.

brieter also than now it is. As we may easily perceive, by comparing the Symbol recited by *Marcellus An- cyranus* ( in the 1<sup>st</sup> Profession of the faith which he delivered to Pope *Julius* ) with the expositions of the *Apostles Creed*, written by the *Latin Doctors* : r where- in the mention of the *Fathers* being *Maker of heaven and earth*, the *Sonnes Death* and *Descending into Hell*, and the *Communion of Saints*, is wholly omitted. All which, though they were of undoubted veritie, yet for brevities sake seeme at first to have beene omitted in this short Summe : because some of them perhaps were not thought to be altogether so necessary for all men ( which is f *Suarez* his judgement touching the point of the *descent into Hell* ) ; and some that were most necessary, either thought to be sufficiently implied in other Articles ( as that of *Christ's death* in those of his *crucifixion* and *buriall* ), or thought to be sufficiently manifested by the light of reason ; as that of the *creation of heaven and earth*. For howsoever this, as it is a truth revealed by God's Word, becometh an object for faith to apprehend ( *Heb. 11. 3.* ) : yet it is otherwise also clearely to be understood by the discourse of reason ( *Rom. 1. 20.* ), even as the *unitie*, and all the other attributes of the Godhead likewise are. Which therefore may be well referred unto those *Præcognita*, or common principles which nature may possesse the minde withall, before that grace enlight- neth it ; and need not necessarily to be inserted into that Symbol, which is the badge and cognizance whereby the Beleever is to be differenced and distin- guished from the Vnbeleever.

The Creed which the Easterne Churches used in  
Bap-

Baptisme, was larger then this being either the same, or very little different from that which we commonly call the *Nicene Creed*; because the greatest part of it was repeated and confirmed in the first generall Councell held at *Nice*: where the first draught thereof was presented to the Synod by *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Cæsarea*, with this Preamble. *As wee have received from the Bishops that were before us, both at our first catechizing, and when we received Baptisme: and as we have learned from the holy Scriptures; and as we have both beleevd and taught, when wee entred into the Ministry, and in our Bishoprick it selfe: so beleeving at this present also, we declare this our faith unto you.* To this the *Nicene Fathers* added a more cleare explication of the Deitie of the Sonne (against the *Arrian* heresie, wherewith the Church was then troubled), professing him to be begotten, not made, and to be of one substance with the Father. The second generall Councell, which was assembled fiftie-six yeares after at *Constantinople*, approving this confession of the faith, as *most ancient and agreeable to Baptisme*, enlarged it somewhat; in the Article that concerned the Holy Ghost especially, which at that time was most oppugned by the *Macedonian* Heretickes. And whereas the *Nicene* confession proceeded no further, than to the beliefe which we have in the holy Trinitie; the Fathers of *Constantinople* made it up, by adding that which was commonly professed touching the Catholicke Church and the priviledges belonging thereunto. *Epiphanius* repeating this Creed at large, *x* affirmeth it to have been delivered unto the Church by the Apostles. *y* *Cassianus* avoucheth as much, where he urgeth this against Ne-

καὶ ὡς πα-  
ρελάβομεν  
παρὰ τῶν  
πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐ-  
πισκόπων, καὶ  
ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ  
κατηχήσει, καὶ  
ὅτε τὸ λυτρὸν  
ἐλάβομεν  
καὶ καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ  
τῶν ἁγίων γρα-  
φῶν μεμαδί-  
καμεν, καὶ ὡς  
ἐν τῇ περὶ  
εὐτερίᾳ καὶ ἐν  
αὐτῇ τῇ ἐπι-  
σκοπῇ ἐπισ-  
τάμεν τε καὶ  
ἐδιδάσχομεν  
οὕτω καὶ νῦν  
πιστευόντες,  
τὴν ἡμετέραν  
πίσιν ὑμῖν  
προσαναφέ-  
ρομεν. *Euseb.*  
*ep. apud Socra-*  
*tem, lib. 1. hist.*  
*cap. 8. (al. 5.) et*  
*Theodoret. li. 1.*  
*cap. 12.*  
ἡ Πρεσβυτά-  
τῳ τε οὕσαν  
καὶ ἀκόλουν  
τῷ βαπτί-  
σματι. *Conc.*  
*Constant. epis. a-*  
*pod Theod. l. 5.*  
*cap. 9.*

*x* *Epiphanius in Ἀγχυρωτ. p. 518. edit. Græc. y* *Io. Cass. lib. 5. de Incarnat. Verbi.*

2. Concil. Tri-  
dentin. (Ses. 3.)  
Symbolum fi-  
dei, quo sancta  
Romana Ec-  
clesia utitur,  
tanquam prin-  
cipium illud,  
in quo omnes,  
qui fidem  
Christi profi-  
tentur necessa-  
rio conveni-  
unt, ac funda-  
mentum firmū  
& unicum,  
contra quod  
portæ inferi  
nunquam præ-  
valebunt, toti-  
dem verbis,  
quibus in om-  
nibus ecclesiis  
legitur, expri-  
mendū esse  
censuit.

*storius*, as the Creed anciently received in the Church of *Antioch*; from whence hee came. The Romane Church, after the dayes of *Charles* the great, added the article of the proceſſion of the *Holy Ghost* from the *Sonne*, unto this Symbol: and the 2<sup>d</sup> Councell of *Trent* hath now recommended it unto us, *as that principle in which all that professe the faith of Christ doe necessarily agree; and the firme and ONELY FOUNDATION, against which the Gates of Hell shall never pre-vaile.*

It is a matter confessed therefore by the Fathers of *Trent* themselves, that in the *Constantinopolitane* Creed, or in the *Romane* Creed at the farthest (which differeth nothing from the other, but that it hath added *Filioque* to the proceſſion of the Holy Ghost, and out of the *Nicene* Creed, *Deum de Deo*, to the articles that concerne the *Sonne*) that *onely foundation*, and principle of faith is to be found, in the *unitie* whereof all Christians must necessarily agree. Which is otherwise cleared sufficiently, by the constant practice of the Apostles and their successors, in the first receiving of men into the Societie of the Church. For in one of the Apostles ordinary Sermons, we see, there was so much matter delivered, as was sufficient to convert men unto the faith, and to make them capable of Baptisme: and those Sermons treated onely of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; upon the receiving whereof, the Church (following the example of the Apostles) never did denie Baptisme unto her *Catechumens*. In these first principles therefore must the foundation be contained, and that common *unitie of faith* which is required in all the

the members of the Church.

The foundation then being thus cleared : concerning the superstruction, we learne from the Apostle, that some <sup>a</sup> *build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble.* Some proceed from one degree of wholesome knowledge unto another; increasing their mainestock, by the addition of those other sacred truthes that are revealed in the word of God: and these build upon the foundation, *gold, and silver, and precious stones.* Others retaine the precious foundation, but lay base matter upon it; *wood, hay, stubble,* and such other eyther unprofitable or more dangerous stufte: and others goe so farre, that they overthrow the very foundation it selfe. The first of these be *wise*, the second *foolish*, the third *madde* builders. When the day of tryall commeth: the first mans <sup>b</sup> *worke shall abide*, and hee himselfe shall *receive a reward*; the second shall lose his worke, but not himselfe; (<sup>c</sup> *he shall suffer losse*, saith the Apostle, *but he himselfe shall be saved*;) the third shall lose both himselfe and his worke together. And as in this spirituall structure verie different kindes of materialls may be laid upon the same foundation, some sound and some unsound: so in either of them, there is a great difference to be made betwixt such as are more contiguous to the foundation, and such as be remoter off. The fuller explication of the first principles of faith, and the conclusions deduced from thence, are in the ranke of those verities that be more neerely conjoynd to the foundation: to which those falsities are answerable on the other side,

D

that

a 1 Cor. 3. 12.

b Ibid. v. 14.

c Ibid. v. 15.

side, that grate upon the foundation, and any way endanger it.

*d* Quædam sunt catholicæ veritates, quæ ita ad fidem pertinent, ut his sublati, fides quoque ipsa tollatur.

Quas nos, usu frequenti non solum catholicas, sed fidei veritates appellavimus.

Aliæ veritates sunt etiam ipsæ catholicæ & universales, nempe quas universa Ecclesia tenet, quibus licet everfis, fides quatitur, sed non evertitur tamen. Atque in hujusmodi veritatū con-

trariis erroribus, dixi fidem obscurari, non extinguī; infirmari, non perire. Has ergo nunquam fidei veritates censui vocandas, quamvis doctrinæ Christianæ veritates sint. Melch. Canus, loc. Theolog. lib. 12 cap. 11. e Necesse est oportet distinguere alios gradus propositionum, per quas etiam si fides non destruat omnino, tamen malè habet, & quatitur, & quasi disponitur ad corruptionem. Sicut sunt quædam corporum læsiones quæ non auferunt vitam, sed malè habet homo per eas, & disponitur ad corruptionem aut in toto aut in parte; aliæ verò sunt læsiones mortales, quæ vitam eripiunt; ita sunt quidam gradus propositionum, continentés doctrinam non sanam, etiam si non habeant hæresim manifestam. Dominic Bannes, in 2am 2æ. quæst. 11. artic. 2.

For that there be diverse degrees both of truths and errors in Religion, which necessarily must be distinguished; is a thing acknowledged, not by us alone, but by the learnedest also of our Adversaries. *d* There be some Catholick verities (say they) which doe so pertaine to faith, that these being taken away, the faith it selfe must be taken away also. And these by common use wee call not onely Catholick, but verities of Faith also. There are other verities which bee Catholick also and universall, namely, such as the whole Church holdeth, which yet being overthrowne, the faith is shaken indeed, but not overturned. And in the errors that are contrary to such truths as these, the faith is obscured, not extinguished; weakened, not perished. Neverthelesse, though the faith bee not altogether destroyed by them, yet is it evill at ease, and shaken, and as it were disposed to corruption. For as there be certaine hurts of the bodie which doe not take away the life, but yet a man is the worse for them, and disposed to corruption eyther in whole or in part; as there be other mortall harts, which take away the life: so likewise are there certaine degrees of propositions, which

containe unsound doctrine, although they have not manifest heresie. In a word, the generall rule concerning all these superstructions, is : that the more neere they are to the foundation, of so much greater importance be the truthes, and so much more perillous be the errors; as againe, the farther they are removed off, the lesse necessary doth the knowledge of such verities prove to be, and the swarving from the truth lesse dangerous.

Now from all that hath beene said, two great Questions may be resolved, which trouble manie. The first is; What wee may judge of our Fore-fathers, who lived in the communion of the Church of Rome? Whereunto I answer, that wee have no reason to thinke otherwise, but that they lived and dyed under the mercie of God. For wee must distinguish the *Papacie* from the *Church* wherein it is, as the Apostle doth *Antichrist* from the *Temple of God*, wherein hee sitteth. The foundation upon which the Church standeth, is that *common faith*, (as we have heard) in the *unitie* whereof all Christians doe generally accord. Vpon this old foundation Antichrist raiseth up his new buildings; and layeth upon it, not *hay* and *stubble* onely, but farre more vile and pernicious matter, which wrencheth and disturbeth the very foundation it selfe. For example. It is a ground of the Catholick faith, that *Christ was borne of the Virgin Mary*: which in the Scripture is thus explained. & God sent forth his *Sonne, Made of a woman*. This the Papacie admitteth for a certaine truth: but insinuateth withall, that upon the Altar God sendeth forth his Sonne  
D 2 made

1<sup>st</sup> Thes. 2. 4.

g Gal. 4. 4.

h Per verba  
consecrationis  
verè & realiter  
uti transsub-  
stantiatur pa-  
nis, ita produ-  
citur & quasi  
generatur  
Christus in al-  
tari, adeò po-  
tenter, & effi-  
caciter, ut si  
Christus nec-  
dum esset in-  
carnatus, per  
hæc verba  
*Hoc est corpus  
meum*, incarna-  
retur, corpusq;  
humanum al-  
sumeret: ut  
graves Theo-  
logi docent.  
*Cornelius Cor-  
nelij à Lapide,  
Commentar. in  
Esai. 7. 14.  
i Confitentur  
alii, quòd fides  
sua, quâ astru-  
unt quòd panis  
& vinum re-  
manent post  
consecrationē  
in naturis suis,  
adhuc servatur  
laicis, & anti-  
quitus serva-  
batur. Io. Tis-  
ington, in Con-  
fessione cont.  
Io. Wicliff. quam  
MS. habeo.*

made of Bread. For the *Transsubstantiation* which these men would have us beleieve, is not an annihilation of the Bread, and a substitution of the Bodie of Christ in the stead thereof, but a reall conversion of the one into the other: such as they themselves would have esteemed to be a bringing forth of Christ, and a kinde of Generation of him. For, to omit the wilde conceits of *Postellus* in his booke *De Nativitate Mediatoris ultimâ*: this is the doctrine of their graver Divines (as *Cornelius à Lapide* the Iesuite doth acknowledge in his *Romane Lectures*) that *by the words of consecration truely and really as the bread is transsubstantiated, so Christ is produced and as it were generated upon the Altar, in such a powerfull and effectuall manner; that, if Christ as yet had not beene incarnate, by these words [Hoc est corpus meum] he should be incarnated, and assume an humane bodie.* And doth not this new Divinitie, thinke you, shrewdly threaten the ancient foundation of the Catholick beleefe of the *Incarnation*?

Yet such as in the dayes of our fore-fathers opposed the Popish doctrine of *Transsubstantiation*, could alledge for themselves, that the faith which they maintained, was then *preserved among the laitie, and so had anciently beene preserved.* And of mine owne knowledge I can testifie, that when I have dealt with some of the common people that would be counted members of the *Romane Church*, and demanded of them what they thought of that which I knew to be the common *Tenet* of their Doctors in this point: they not onely rejected it with indignation, but wondered also that I should imagine any of their  
side

side to be so foolish, as to give credit to such a senselesse thing. Neither may we account it to have been a small blessing of God unto our ancestors, who lived in that kingdome of darkenesse, that the Ignorance wherein they were bred, freed them from the understanding of those things, which being known might prove so prejudiciall to their soules health. *For there be some things, which it is better for a man to be ignorant of, than to know*: and the <sup>1</sup>not knowing of those profundities, which are indeed *the depths of Satan*, is to those that have not the skil to dive into the bottome of such mysteries of iniquitie, a good and an happie Ignorance.

k Sunt enim quædam, quæ nescire, quàm scire, sit melius. Aug. Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap. 17.  
l Rev. 2. 24.

The ignorance of those principles of the Catholique faith, that are absolutely necessarie to salvation, is as dangerous a gulfe on the other side: but the light of those common truthes of Christianitie was so great, and so firmly fixed in the mindes of those that professed the name of Christ, that it was not possible for the power of darkenesse to extinguish it, nor the gates of Hell to prevaile against it. Nay, the verie solemne dayes, which by the ancient institution of the Church were celebrated for the commemoration of the *Blessed Trinitie*, the *Nativity*, *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension* of our Saviour Christ, did so preserve the memorie of these things among the common people; that by the <sup>m</sup>Popish Doctors themselves, it is made an argument of grosse and supine Ignorance, that any should not have explicite knowledge of those mysteries of Christ, which were thus publikely solemnized in the Church. And (which is the principall

m Sylvest. in Summa, verb. Fides. §. 6. ex Thom. in 2a 2a, quaest. 2. art. 7.

n See my Trea-  
tise De Chri-  
stianarum Ec-  
clesiarum suc-  
cessione & sta-  
tu, cap. 7 §. 21.  
22. and the An-  
swere to the Je-  
suite, pag. 514.  
515.

point of all) the ordinary instruction appointed to be given unto men upon their death-beds, was: <sup>a</sup> that they should looke *to come to glorie, not by their owne merits, but by the vertue and merit of the passion of our Lord Iesus Christ*; that they should place *their whole confidence in his death onely, and in no other thing*; and that they should *interpose his death betwixt God and their sinnes, betwixt them and Gods anger.*

So that where these things did thus concur in any (as wee doubt not but they did in many thousands), the knowledge of the common principles of the faith, the ignorance of such maine errours as did endanger the foundation, a godly life, and a faithfull death: there we have no cause to make any question, but that God had fitted a subject for his mercy to worke upon. And yet in saying thus, wee doe nothing lesse than say that such as these were *Papists*, either in their life or in their death: members of the Romane Church perhaps they were, but such as by God's goodnes were preserved from the mortalitie of *Popery* that raigned there. For *Popery* it selfe is nothing else but the botch or the plague of that Church: which hazardeth the soules of those it seizeth upon, as much as any infection can doe the body. And therefore if any one will needs be so foolehardy as to take up his lodging in such a Pest-house, after warning given of the present danger; wee in our charitie may well say, *Lord have mercy upon him*: but he, in the meane time, hath great cause to feare, that God in his justice will inflict that judgement upon him, which <sup>o</sup> in this case he hath threatned against such as will *not beleeeve the truth, but take pleasure*

o 2 Thess. 2.  
13.

sure in vnrighteousnesse. And so much may suffice for that question.

The second question, so rise in the mouthes of our Adversaries, is : *where was your Church before Luther ?* Whereunto an answer may bee returned from the grounds of the solution of the former question : that our Church was even there where now it is. In all places of the world, where the ancient foundations were retained, and those common principles of faith, upon the profession whereof men have ever beene wont to be admitted, by Baptisme, into the Church of Christ : there we doubt not but our Lord had his subjects, and wee our fellow-servants. For wee bring-in no new Faith, nor no new Church. That which in the time of the ancient Fathers was accounted to be *truely and properly Catholick*, namely, *that which was beleaved every where, alwayes, and by all* : that in the succeeding ages hath evermore beene preserved, and is at this day entirely professed in our Church. And it is well observed by a learned man, who hath written a full discourse of this argument ; that *whatsoever the Father of lies either hath attempted or shall attempt, yet neither hath he hitherto effected, nor shall ever bring it to passe hereafter, that this Catholick doctrine, ratified by the common consent of Christians alwayes and every where, should be abolished ; but that in the thickest mist rather of the most perplexed troubles, it still obtained victorie,*

*cem extitisse, & in animis & in aperta confessione Christianorum omnium, in suis fundamentis nullo modo labefactatam. In illa quoque veritate unam illam Ecclesiam fuisse conservatam in mediis saevissimæ hyemis tempestatibus, vel densissimis tenebris suorum interluniorum. Ioh. Serranus, in Apparatu ad fidem Cathol. edit Paris. an. 1607. pag. 172.*

both

p In ipsa Catholica Ecclesia magnopere curandum est, ut id teneamus quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est : hoc est etenim verè proprièq; Catholicum. Vincent. Lirin. cont. haeres. cap. 3.  
q Quicquid vel molitus sit vel moliturus sit mendacii Pater, non tamen vel effectuisse hætenus vel effecturum posthæc, ut hæc doctrina catholica, omnium Christianorum consensu, semper & ubique rata, aboleatur : quin potius, illam in densissimâ maximè involutarum perturbationum caligine victri-

*both in the mindes and in the open confession of all Christians, no wayes overturned in the foundation thereof: and that in this veritie that one Church of Christ was preserved in the midst of the tempests of the most cruell winter, or in the thickest darknes of her waynings.*

Thus if at this day we should take a survey of the severall professions of Christianitie, that have any large spread in any part of the world (as of the Religion of the *Romane* and the *Reformed Churches* in our Quarters, of the *Egyptians* and *Aethiopians* in the South, of the *Grecians* and other Christians in the Easterne parts), and should put-by the points wherein they did differ one from another, and gather into one body the rest of the Articles wherein they all did generally agree: wee should finde, that in those propositions which without all controversie are universally received in the whole Christian world, so much truth is contained, as, being joyned with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man unto everlasting salvation. Neither have wee cause to doubt, but that *as many as doe walke according to this rule* (neither overthrowing that which they have builded by superinducing any damnable heresies thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their holie faith with a lewd and wicked conversation) *peace shall bee upon them, and mercie, and upon the Israel of GOD.*

Now these common principles of the Christian faith, which we call *κοινονισμα*, or things generally beleaved of all, as they have *Universality*, and *Antiquity*, and *Consent* concurring with them (which by *Vincentius*

f Vniversita-  
tem, antiquita-  
tem, consensio-  
nem. Vincent.  
Lirin. cont. he-  
reses. cap. 30.

*centius* his rule, are the speciall characters of that which is truely and properly *Catholick*: so for their *Duration* wee are sure that they have still held out, and beene kept as the *Seminarie* of the *Catholique Church* in the darkeſt and difficulteſt times that ever have beene: where if the Lord of Hostes had not in his mercy reserved this ſeed unto us, we should long ſince *have beene as Sodom, and should have beene like unto Gomorrah.* It cannot be denied indeed, that Sathan and his instruments have used their utmost endeavour, either to hide this light from mens eyes, by keeping them in grosse ignorance, or to deprave it by bringing-in pernicious heresies; and that in these latter ages they have much prevailed both wayes, aswell in the West and North, as in the East and South. Yet farre be it, for all this, from any man to thinke, that *God should so cast away his people,* that in those times there should not be left a remnant according to the election of grace. t Esay. 1. 9.

The *Christian Church* was never brought unto a lower ebbe, than was the *Iewish Synagogue* in the dayes of our Saviour Christ; when *the Interpreters* of the Law had taken away the key of knowledge: and that little knowledge that remained, was miserably corrupted, not onely with the leaven of the *Pharisees*, but also with the damnable heresie of the *Sadduces*. And yet a man at that time might have seene the true servants of God standing together with these men in the selfe-same Temple: which might well be accounted, as the *House of the Saints* in regard of the one, so a *Denne of theeves* in respect of

E of

of the other. When the pestilent heresie of the *Arrians* had polluted the whole world; the people of *Christ* were not to bee found among them onely who made an open secession from that wicked company, but among those also who held externall communion with them, and lived under their Ministry. Where they so learned the other truthes of *God* from them, that they were yet ignorant of their maine errour; *God* in his providence so ordering matters, that (as it is noted by *S.<sup>y</sup> Hilary*) *the people of Christ should not perish under the Priests of Antichrist.*

y Et hujus  
quodam usque  
adhuc impie-  
tatis occasio  
per fraudem  
perficitur; ut  
jam sub Anti-  
christi Sacer-  
dotibus Chri-  
sti populus  
non occidat.  
*Hilar. contr.*  
*Auxentium.*  
z Revel. 2. 13.

a Rev. 18. 4.

If you demand then, Where was *Gods Temple* all this while? the answer is at hand: There where *Antichrist* fate. Where was *Christs* people? Even under *Antichrists* Priests: and yet this is no justification at all, either of *Antichrist*, or of his *Priests*; but a manifestation of *Gods* great power, who is able to uphold his Church even there <sup>z</sup> *where Satans throne is.* Babylon was an infectious place, and the infection thereof was mortall: and yet *God* had his people there, whom hee preserved from the mortalitie of that infection. Else, how should he have said; <sup>a</sup> *Come out of her my people, that yee bee not partakers of her sinnes, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* If the place had not bene infectious, he should not have needed to forwarne them of the danger wherein they stood of partaking in her sinnes; and if the infection had not bene mortall, he would not have put them in minde of the *plagues* that were to follow: and if in the place thus mortally infected, *God* had not preserved a people alive unto himselfe, he could

not

not have said; *Come out of her my people.*

The enimie indeed had there sowne his tares: but  
 sowne them in the LORDS field, and among the  
 LORDS wheate. And a field, we know, may so bee  
 overgrowne with such evill weedes as these; that  
 at the first sight a man would hardly thinke, that any  
 corne were there at all: even as in the barne it selfe,  
 the mixture of the chaffe with the wheate is some-  
 time such, as a-farre off a man would imagine that he  
 did see, but a heape of chaffe, and nothing else. Those  
 worthy husbandmen that in these last 600. yeares  
 have taken paines in plucking up those pernicious  
 weedes out of the LORDS field, and severing the  
 chaffe from his graine; cannot be rightly said in do-  
 ing this, eyther to have brought in another field, or  
 to have changed the ancient graine. The field is the  
 same, but weeded now, unweeded then: the graine  
 the same, but winnowed now, unwinnowed then.  
 We preach no new faith, but the same Catholique  
 faith that ever hath beene preached: neyther was  
 it any part of our meaning to begin a new Church  
 in these latter dayes of the world, but to reforme  
 the old. A tree that hath the luxurious branches  
 lopped off, and the noxious things that cleave unto  
 it taken away; is not by this pruning and purging of  
 it made another tree than it was before: neyther is  
 the Church *reformed* in our dayes, another Church  
 than that which was *deformed* in the dayes of our  
 fore-fathers; though it hath no agreement, for all  
 that, with *Poperie*, which is the Pestilence that wal-  
 ked in those times of darkenesse, and the destruction

b Mat. 13. 24.

25.

c Infelix loli-  
um, & steriles  
dominantur  
avenæ.

d Grana cum  
cœperint tri-  
turi interpa-  
leam, se non  
jam tangunt,  
& quasi non se  
noverunt, quia  
intercedit me-  
dio palea. Et  
quicunq; lon-  
gius attendit  
aream, paleam  
solummodo  
putat: nisi di-  
ligentiùs in-  
tueatur, nisi  
manum porri-  
gat, nisi spiritu  
oris, id est, fla-  
tu purgante  
discernat; dif-  
ficilè pervenit  
ad discretionē  
granorum.  
Serm. 221. de  
Tempore, tomo.  
10. Oper. Augu-  
stini.

that now wasteth at noone day.

And thus have I finished that which I had to speak, concerning *the unitie of the faith* : for the further explication whereof, the Apostle addeth. [*and of the knowledge of the Sonne of God.*] Wherein wee may observe both the Nature of this Grace, and the Object of it. For the former, we see that Faith is here described unto us by *Knowledge* : to shew unto us, that Knowledge is a thing that is necessarily required in true beleeving ; Whereof this may bee an argument sufficient : that in matters of faith the Scripture doth use indifferently the termes of *knowing* and *beleeving*. So Iob 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* Ioh. 17. 3. *This is life eternall, that they know thee the onely true God, and Iesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Esai. 53. 11. *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant iustifie manie.* As therefore in the fundamentall truthes of Christian Religion *unitie of faith* is required among all those that belong to the Catholick Church : so in those maine grounds likewise there is *unitie of knowledge* generally required among all that professe the name of Christ.

For some things there be, the knowledge whereof is absolutely necessarie, *necessitate mediij vel finis* (as the School-men speak : ) without which no man may expect, by Gods ordinarie law, to attaine unto the *end* of his faith, the salvation of his soule. And

e Necessarium  
necessitate  
medii appellat  
Theologi il-  
lud, quod ex  
lege ordinariâ  
Dei, sic ad sa-  
lutem necessa-  
riam est, ut  
quicumque eti-  
am ob igno-  
rantiam invin-  
cibilem, vel  
quacunq; aliâ  
de causâ id  
non fuerit af-  
secutus, is ne-  
queat etiam  
consequi salu-  
tem. Greg. de  
Valentiâ, com. 3.  
commentar.  
Theolog. quæst.  
2. punct. 2. col.  
299. Illa quæ  
sunt necessaria  
necessitate fi-  
nis, si desint,  
nobis etiam  
sine culpâ no-  
stra, non excu-  
sant nos ab  
æternâ morte;  
quamvis non  
fuerit in no-  
strâ potestate

illa assequi. Quemadmodum etiam si non sit nisi unicum remedium, ut aliquis fugiat mortem corporalem, & tale remedium ignoretur & ab infirmo & medico ; sine dnbio peribit homo ille. Dom. Bannus, in 2am 2æ, quæst. 2. art. 8. col. 348.

in

in these a man may lose himselfe, not by *Heresie* onely, which is a flat denying; but by *Ignorance* also, which is a bare not knowing of them: these things being acknowledged to be so necessarie, that although it lay not in our power to attaine thereunto, yet this invincible Ignorance should not excuse us from everlasting death. Even as if there were one onely remedie, whereby a sicke man could be recovered, and freed from corporall death: suppose the patient and the Physitian both were ignorant of it, the man must perish, as well not knowing it, as if being brought unto him, he had refused it. And therefore in this case it is resolved, that <sup>1</sup> from the explicite faith, & actuall knowledge of these things, nothing can excuse but onely such an incapacitie as is found in infants, naturals, and distracted persons: and that in all others which have the use of reason, although they want the meanes of instruction, this Ignorance is not onely perillous, but also damnable.

The danger then of this Ignorance being, by the confession of the most judicious Divines of both sides, acknowledged to be so great: the wofull estate of the poore Countrey wherein I live, is much to bee lamented, where the people generally are suffered to perish for want of knowledge: the vulgar superstitions of Poperie not doing them halfe that hurt, that the ignorance of those common principles of the faith doth, which all true Christians are bound to learne. The consideration whereof, hath sometime drawne mee to treat with those of

f Sicut ad legis Christi habitualem fidem omnis viciator obligatur sine ullâ exceptione: sic ab ejus actuali fide nullus excusatur nisi solâ incapacitate, &c. Parvulos autem & furiosos, cæterisq; passionibus mente captos, seu aliâ naturali impossibilitate prohibitos, incapaces voco: etsi non simpliciter, tamē secundum quid; sc. dum his defectibus laborant. *Perr. de Aliaco, in questione Vesperiarum.*

the opposite party, & to move them: that howsoever in other things we did differ one from another, yet wee should joyne together in teaching those maine points, the knowledge whereof was so necessary unto salvation, and of the truth whereof there was no controversie betwixt us. But what for the jealousies, which these distractions in matters of Religion have bred among us, & what for other respects, the motion took small effect: & so betwixt us both, the poor people are kept still in miserable ignorance, neither knowing the grounds of the one religion nor of the other.

Here the case (God be thanked) is farre otherwise: where your *Maiesties* care can never be sufficiently commended, in taking order, that the chiefe heads of the *Catechisme* should, in the ordinarie ministerie, be diligently propounded and explained unto the people throughout the land. Which I wish were as duely executed every where, as it was piously by You intended. Great Scholars possibly may thinke, that it standeth not so well with their credite, to stoop thus low, and to spend so much of their time in teaching these rudiments and first principles of the doctrine of Christ. But they should consider, that the laying of the foundation skillfully, as it is the matter of greatest importance in the whole building, so is it the very master-peece of the

g 1 Cor. 3. 10. wisest builder & According to the grace of God which is given unto mee, as a wise master-builder, I have layd the foundation: saith the great Apostle. And let the learnedest of us all try it when-ever wee please; wee shall finde, that to lay this ground-worke rightly,

ly, (that is, to apply our selves unto the capacitie of the common Auditorie, and to make an Ignorant man to understand these mysteries in some good measure) will put us to the tryall of our skill, and trouble us a great deale more, than if we were to discusse a controversie, or handle a subtile point of learning in the Schooles. Yet <sup>h</sup> Christ did give as well his *Apostles*, and *Prophets*, and *Evangelists*, as his ordinarie *Pastors* and *Teachers*, to bring us all, both learned and unlearned, unto the unitie of this faith and knowledge: and the neglecting of this, is the frustrating of the whole worke of the Ministerie. For let us preach never so many Sermons unto the people, our labour is but lost, as long as the foundation is unlaid, and the first principles untaught, upon which all other doctrine must be builded.

h Ephes. 4. 11.

Hee therefore that will <sup>i</sup> studie to shew himselfe <sup>i</sup> 2 Tim. 3. 15 approved unto God, a workeman that needeth not to be ashamed, dividing the word of God aright; must have a speciall care to plant this Kingdome both in the mindes and in the hearts of them that heare him. I say, in the hearts aswell as in the mindes: because we may not content our selves with a bare *Theoricall* knowledge, which is an information onely of the Vnderstanding, and goeth no further than the braine; but we must labour to attaine unto a further degree both of *Experimentall* and of *Practicall* Knowledge, in the things that wee have learned. A young man may talke much of the troubles of the world, and a Scholar in the Vniversitie may shew a great deale of wit in making a large declamation up-

k Gen 3. 9. 17.

1 Ephe. 3. 19.

m Phil. 3. 8.

upon that argument : but when the same men have afterwards been beaten in the world, they will confesse that they spake before they knew not what, and count their former apprehension of these things to be but meere Ignorance, in respect of that new learning which now they have bought by deare experience. The tree in Paradise, of which our first parents were forbidden to eate, was called <sup>k</sup> *the tree of knowledge of good and evill* : because it signified unto them, that as now while they stood upon termes of obedience with their Creator, they knew nothing but *good*; so at what time soever they did transgresse his commandement, they should begin to know *evill* also, whereof before they had no knowledge, not but that they had an *intellectuall* knowledge of it before (for he that knoweth good, cannot be ignorant of that which is contrarie unto it; *Rectum* being alwayes *index sui & obliqui*;) but that till then they never had felt any evill, they never had any *experimentall* knowledge of it. So our Apostle in this Epistle boweth his knees unto the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, that hee would grant unto these Ephesians, <sup>1</sup> *to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge* : shewing, that there is a further degree of knowledge in this kinde, that may be felt by the heart, though not comprehended by the braine: and in the Epistle to the Philippians, <sup>m</sup> he counteth all things but losse *for the excellent knowledge sake of Christ Iesus his Lord*. Meaning hereby a knowledge grounded upon deepe experience of the vertue of Christs death and resurrection, in his owne soule:

as

as he expoundeth it himselfe, in the words following. <sup>n</sup> *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death.* n Ibid. vers. 10.

There is an *Experimentall* knowledge then to be looked after, beside the *Mentall*: and so is there a *Practicall* knowledge likewise, as well as an *Intellectuall*. When Christ is said to have *knowne no sinne*: wee cannot understand this of *Intellectuall* knowledge (for had he not thus knowne sinne, he could not have reprov'd it as he did) but of *Practicall*. So that, <sup>o</sup> *Hee knew no sinne*, in S. Paul; must be conceived to be the very same with, <sup>p</sup> *He did no sinne*, in S. Peter. In the first to the Romanes, they that <sup>q</sup> *knew God*, because they *glorified him not as God*, are therefore said, <sup>r</sup> *not to have God in their knowledge*. o 2 Cor. 5. 21.  
p 1 Pet. 2. 22.  
q Rom. 1. 21.  
r Ibid. vers. 18.

God made his wayes and his lawes knowne to the children of Israel in the desert; and yet he said of them: *It is a people that doe erre in their heart, and they have not knowne my wayes*. For there is an error in the heart, as well as in the braine: and a kinde of ignorance arising from the will, as well as from the minde. And therefore in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, <sup>s</sup> all sinnes are termed *ἁγνοῦματα*, ignorances, and <sup>t</sup> sinners *ἁγνοῦντες καὶ πλανώμενοι*, ignorant and erring persons: because how ever in the generall the understanding may be informed rightly, yet when particular actions come to be resolved upon, mens perverse wils and inordinate affections cloude their mindes, and lead them out of the way. That therefore is to bee accounted *found Knowledge*, which sinketh from the braine into the heart, and from s Psal. 95. 10.  
Heb. 3. 10.  
t Heb. 9. 7.  
compared with  
Lev. 16. 16. 17.  
u Heb. 5. 2.  
Aristot. Ethic.  
lib. 3. cap. 1.  
Ἀγνοεῖ μὲν  
ὅτι πᾶς ὁ  
μοχθῆρες ἅ  
δεῖ παρὰ τὴν  
καὶ ἐν δὲ ἀ-  
ρετῆς. καὶ  
διὰ τὴν τοιαύ-  
την ἁμαρτί-  
αν, ἀδικοὶ καὶ  
ὁλως κακοὶ  
γίνονται.

F thence

thence breaketh forth into action: (setting head, heart, hand, and all a worke:) and so much onely must thou reckon thy selfe to know in Christianitie, as thou art able to make use of in practise. For as Saint *Iam. 2. 18.* *Iames* saith of faith; *Shew me thy faith by thy workes:* so doth he in like manner of knowledge. *I who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge amongst you? let him shew out of a good conversation his workes with meekenesse of wisdom:* and *S. Iohn* much to the same purpose. *Hereby we doe know that we know him, if wee keepe his commandements. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.*

He speaketh there of Iesus Christ the righteous: the Sonne of God, who is here in my text likewise made the Object of this Knowledge. *a Thou art Christ the Sonne of the living God:* is by Christ himselfe made the rock upon which the whole Church is builded, And, *b Other foundation (saith S. Paul) can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Iesus Christ.* *c Vid. Aug. lib. de fide & oper. 9.* *\* Not that wee should thinke, that there were no other fundamentall doctrine to bee acknowledged but this alone (for the articles of the Holy Ghost, forgivenessse of sinnes, resurrection of the dead, eternall judgement, and such like other, have their place also in the foundation) but because this is the most speciall object of faith, and the primarie foundation of all the other. For first, as God is made the coæquate object of the whole bodie of Divinitie, notwithstanding it treateth also of men and Angels, Heaven and Hell, Sinne and Obedience, and fundrie other particulars; because all these are brought*

brought to God *reductinely*, it not as explications of his Nature, yet of his Workes and Kingdome: so likewise may *Christ* be made the primarie head of all other fundamentall articles, because they have all reference unto him; being such as concerne eyther his Father, or his Spirit, or his Incarnation, or his Office of Mediation, or his Church, or the speciall Benefits which he hath purchased for it.

*Secondly*, howsoever this faith and knowledge, being taken in their larger extent, have for their full object what-ever is revealed in the Word of God: yet as they build us upon the foundation, as they incorporate us into the mysticall body, as they are the meanes of our justification and life, they looke upon the *Sonne of God*, and him onely. *The holy Scriptures* (within the bounds whereof the utmost extent of all our faith and knowledge must be contained) *are able to make us wise unto salvation*; but yet through *faith which is in Christ Iesus* (2 Tim. 3. 15. So, by his knowledge (or the knowledge of himselfe) shall my righteous servant iustifie many: sayth the Father of the Son, Esay 53. 11. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me: saith the Apostle, Gal. 2. 20. The children of Israel in the wilderness, being stung with fierie Serpents, were directed, for their recovery, to looke upon the brazen Serpent: which was a figure of the Son of man, lifted up upon the Crosse; that whosoever did beleewe in him, might not perish, but have eternall life. Now as the Israelites with the same eyes, and with the same visive facultie, wherewith they beheld the sands and the

c Ioh. 3. 14-15

f Heb. 11. 3.

mountaines in the desert, did looke upon the brazen Serpent also; but were cured by fastning their sight upon that alone, and not by looking upon any other object: so by the same faith and knowledge whereby we are justified, *we understand that the world was framed by the word of God*, and beleeeve all other truths revealed; and yet *fides quâ iustificans*, faith as it doth justifie us, doth not look upon these, but fixeth it selfe solely upon the Son of God, not knowing any thing here but Iesus Christ and him crucified. And thus hath our Saviour a speciall and peculiar place in that larger foundation: according to that of the Apostle, Ephes. 2. 20. *Yee are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, & of which* (for so his words in the Originall may well beare it) *Iesus Christ is the chiefe corner-stone.*

ὁ ὄντος ἀκρο-  
γωνία ἡ ἀνδρ  
αὐτῶ (sc. δε-  
μολιῶ) ἰησοῦ  
Χριστοῦ.  
h Heb. 6. 2.

It followeth now, that wee should proceed from the foundation to the structure: and so *leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, goe on unto perfection* [unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ]: There is a time wherein Christ is but begun, and as it were a-breeding in us. Gal. 4. 19. *My little children, of whom I travell in birth againe untill Christ be formed in you.* After that he hath beene formed in our hearts, he is at first but as a babe there; yet resteth not at that stay: but as in his naturall body hee *increased in stature*, so in every part of his mysticall body hee hath set for himselfe a certaine measure of stature, and a fulnesse of growth; which being attained unto, a Christian is thereby made a perfect man. And for this end also doth the Apostle here shew that the Ministry was instituted, *that we*

i Luk. 2. 52.

k Eph. 4. 14. 15.

*we henceforth should be no more children* (as it is in the words immediately following my Text), but that we might *grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*. For the perfection which the Apostle here speaketh of, is not to be taken absolutely, (as if any absolute perfection could be found among men in this life) but in comparison with childhood; As the opposition is more clearly made by him, in 1. Corinth. 14. 20. *Brethren, be not children, in understanding, howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be perfect*, that is to say, of mans estate. And, Heb. 5. 13. 14. *Every one that useth milke, is unskilfull in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe: but strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect*, that is, *that are of full age*; as our Interpreters have rightly rendred it.

Now as there is great difference among men in their naturall growth, so is there no lesse varietie among them also in respect of their spirituall stature: there being severall degrees of this imperfect kinde of perfection here spoken of; which, according to the diversitie of times, places, and persons, may admit a greater or a lesser measure. For we may not thinke that the same measure of knowledge (for example) is sufficient for a learned man and an unlearned; for a Pastor, and for an ordinarie Christian; for those that lived in the time of darknesse, and them that enjoy the light of the Gospel; for them that have the meanes, and them that want it. But, according to the measure of the gift of God, wee must know notwithstanding that it is required generally of all men; *that they grow in grace, and in the*

I Ephes. 4. 15.

knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ. (2. Pet. 2. 18.) not in knowledge onely, but in grace: even <sup>1</sup>grow up into him in ALL things, which is the head; as our Apostle here admonisheth us. Wee must proceed from faith to faith, (Rom. 1. 17.) that is, from one measure and degree of it unto another: and this being the root, and other graces as it were the branches, if it grow apace, other graces also must hasten, and ripen, and grow proportionably with it: else thou mayest justly suspect, that thy growth is not sound, and answerable to that which the Apostle sheweth to be in the mysticall body of Christ; which

in Ephes. 4. 16

<sup>m</sup> according to the effectuall working in the measure of EVERY part, maketh increase of the bodie, unto the edifying of it selfe in love. The time will not permit me to proceed any further: and therefore here I end.

in Heb. 13. 20.  
21.

<sup>n</sup> Now the God of peace, that brought againe from the dead our Lord Iesus, that great Shepheard of the Sheepe, through the bloud of his everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good worke to doe his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Iesus Christ: to whom be glorie for ever and ever. Amen.

(\* \* \*)

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